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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/988,212	11/19/2001	Kenji Endo	215075US-3DIV	8193

22850 7590 03/18/2002

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EXAMINER

BOWER, KENNETH W

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3651

DATE MAILED: 03/18/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/988,212

Applicant(s)

ENDO, KENJI

Examiner

Kenneth W Bower

Art Unit

3651

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 February 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-20 and 22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 15, 16 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 17, 19, 20 and 22 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

2. Claims 15, 16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Joyce et al.

Joyce et al. discloses a sheet feeding device (column 1, lines 5 and 6), for an image forming device (column 1, line 13), plurality of separating members (30, 32, 34, 50 and 70), separating sheets one by one (Fig 3), automatic separation angle switching mechanism for automatically switching an angle of said plurality of separating members (column 1, lines 31-50), drive means and separation pressure variation drive and control means (64 and 66), control means (affect illustrated in fig. 4).

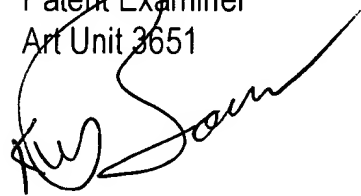
3. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sekiguchi.

Sekiguchi discloses a sheet feeding device (column 1, line 6), for an image forming device (column 1, line 9), plurality of separating members (36 and 37), separating sheets one by one (Abstract, line 6), automatic separation angle switching mechanism for automatically switching an angle of said plurality of separating members (column 10, lines 29-38).

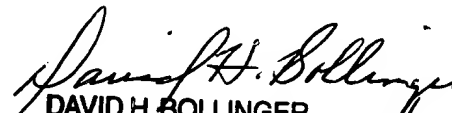
Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kenneth W. Bower whose email address is ken.bower@uspto.gov, telephone number is (703) 306-4546, facsimile number for unofficial communication is (703) 308-0552 with (703) 308-2571 as back up. The examiner is normally available from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM Eastern Time on Monday through Thursday and on every second Friday. The official facsimile number for this group is (703) 305-3579. Status or general information queries should be directed to the Group Receptionist at (703) 308-1113. If necessary, the Group Receptionist can assist with contacting the examiner's supervisor.

Kenneth W. Bower
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3651



Kwb
9 March 2002



DAVID H. BOLLINGER
PRIMARY EXAMINER 3/14/02